

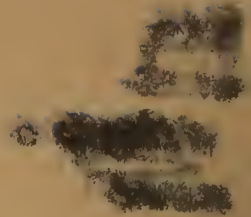
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**STANDING OPERATING PROCEDURE
FOR
UNCLASSIFIED
SUBJECT CORRESPONDENCE FILES**



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HQO P5211.7B
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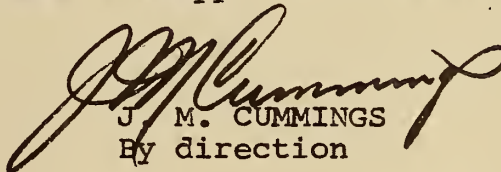
HEADQUARTERS ORDER P5211.7B

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps
To: Distribution List

Subj: Standing Operating Procedure for Unclassified Subject
Correspondence Files

Encl: (1) LOCATOR SHEET

1. Purpose. To update and republish instructions governing Standards and Procedures for the unclassified subject correspondence files.
2. Cancellation. HQO P5211.7A.
3. Certification. Reviewed and approved this date.


J. M. CUMMINGS
By direction

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ENCLOSURE (1)

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STANDING OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR UNCLASSIFIED
SUBJECT CORRESPONDENCE FILES

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STANDING OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR UNCLASSIFIED
SUBJECT CORRESPONDENCE FILES

INTRODUCTION

0001 GENERAL

1. The documentation of the history, policies, programs, and procedures of an organization is essential to its efficient and continued operation. The divergent subjects with which the Marine Corps is concerned, the number of individual offices, and the decentralization of file operations combine to make the filing problem at this Headquarters complicated. In this complex situation, efficient file operations are required to facilitate the functions of this Headquarters and to accomplish sound correspondence files administration. It is necessary, therefore, to comply with an organized plan. The success of a plan depends upon the cooperation of everyone who uses it.

0002 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1. The purpose of this manual is to provide a standard system for orderly files maintenance and disposition; and to establish procedures for those responsible for file operations. Unity of method and operation will increase the administrative usefulness of correspondence files; expedite their disposition when they have served their local usefulness; facilitate the preservation of papers having permanent value; and simplify the training of employees.

0003 TECHNICAL CONTROL

1. The Central Files Section has technical control and cognizance over the maintenance and servicing of the unclassified subject correspondence files of this Headquarters, and will assist operating offices in establishing decentralized files as well as furnish guidance in the maintenance and retirement of files.

2. Staff agencies maintaining decentralized files will apply the procedures prescribed by this manual and coordinate the correspondence files in temporary custody with the over-all system of Headquarters Marine Corps.

3. Correspondence files play a vital role in any office and the type of files service provided directly effects the work in the office. The files operator is concerned primarily

with furnishing efficient files service. He must recognize that coordination must exist in correspondence files within his custody and the overall system. It is a requirement that the files operator be cognizant of the mission and the organization of the activity and be given detailed training as to functions performed by each organizational unit. Appropriate reference material should be furnished to the file operator to aid his filing and finding procedures.

0004 PRINCIPLES AND APPLICATION

1. The principles contained in this manual are applicable to correspondence filing and will be used when establishing and managing correspondence files. SECNAVINST 5210.11A, Standard Subject Identification Codes is designed to meet specific requirements of the various offices. Additional basic subject identification numbers will not be added to the system.

0005 CENTRAL AND DECENTRALIZED FILES

1. This Headquarters has a combined system of central and decentralized filing. Authority to establish and maintain a decentralized file within a staff agency will be obtained through submission of a written request to the Director, Administrative Division (Code AB). Decentralized files are established as sub-stations and maintained under the technical control of the Central Files Section. These files are physically located within the office having cognizance over them. They are papers received, promulgated and used by that office and deal with functions and responsibilities of that office. They consist of material of both permanent and temporary value.

2. Appropriately, the Central Files Section maintains papers which document policy, programs, and organizational administration, considered to be of permanent value and which are used jointly by several offices.

0006 PLANNING THE FILE

1. Current planning for correspondence files maintenance accomplishes two objectives; one, the preservation of files having permanent value; and two, the systematic disposition of those files of temporary value in accordance with HQO P5212.3B, Headquarters Records Disposition Manual. Maintaining permanent and temporary files as separate series facilitates in disposition when they are no longer current.

CHAPTER 1

STANDARD SUBJECT IDENTIFICATION CODES (SSIC)

1000 DESCRIPTION

1. SECNAVINST 5210.11A, Standard Subject Identification Codes is based on the Directives System and is prescribed for use throughout the Navy and Marine Corps for classifying and filing general correspondence and related records by subject.

2. This system permits the use of thirteen major subject groups of numerical series. Each of the thirteen subject groups in the table is designated by a four of five-digit numeric code. These groups are:

1000 Series	MILITARY PERSONNEL
2000 Series	COMMUNICATIONS
3000 Series	OPERATIONS AND READINESS
4000 Series	LOGISTICS
5000 Series	GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT
6000 Series	MEDICINE AND DENTISTRY
7000 Series	FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
8000 Series	ORDNANCE MATERIAL
9000 Series	SHIPS DESIGN AND MATERIAL
10000 Series	GENERAL MATERIAL
11000 Series	FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES ASHORE
12000 Series	CIVILIAN PERSONNEL
13000 Series	AERONAUTICAL AND ASTRONAUTICAL MATERIAL

1001 ADAPTATION

1. The thirteen major numerical subject groups are subdivided into primary, secondary and sometimes tertiary breakdowns. Primary subjects are designated by the last three digits (the hundred group) of the code number.

For example, primary groups listed under the major subject of General Administration and Management, code 5000 are as follows:

5000 GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

5200 Management Programs and Techniques

5300 Manpower/Personnel

5400 Organization, Functions and Status

2. Primary subjects are subdivided into secondary subjects by the last two digits of the numeric code. Tertiary breaks are indicated by the final digit, for example:

5200 Management Programs and Techniques

5210 Records/Paperwork Management; Office Methods

5211 Files and Records Systems

3. Activities desiring to make arbitrary breakdowns may further subdivide by adding slants (/) in order to facilitate reference. The arbitrary subdivisions are for an activity's own convenience and are considered as a local break. Local subdivisions must be logical and systematic and always preceded by a slant (/), separating them from the standard classification number. Arbitrary names or titles assigned the same subject classification number should be filed in alphabetical sequence. (See subparagraphs b, c, and d, below.) Numbers, subjects, names or locations may be used. For example:

a. Adding Arbitrary Numbers

5450 Shore Establishment

5450/1 Reserve Units

5450/1-1 Activation, Deactivation

b. Adding Arbitrary Words (Subjects)

5212 Records Disposal Systems

5212/Disposals

5212/Transfers

c. Adding Arbitrary Names

5420 Boards, Committees, Councils, and Groups

5420/AdHoc Committee

5420/Mess Fund Board

d. Adding Arbitrary Locations

5321 Complements and Allowances

5321/Albany

5321/Parris Island

e. Combining File Numbers

*4200/10340 Procurement of Fuel

* The first number indicates the principal subject.

CHAPTER 2

FILING EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

2000 STANDARD EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

1. Proper equipment and supplies simplify and speed up filing operations. Cabinets and file folders have been standardized for use in unclassified correspondence files. The five drawer, letter-size filing cabinet and the file folder as described in chapter 5, is prescribed for use at this Headquarters.

2. In addition to the equipment normally furnished within an office for files maintenance, the following items will be needed:

- a. Subject Identification Labels.
- b. Rubber stamps for opening and closing out folders.
- c. Folder Labels (paste-on fanfold, used to indicate retention standards (refer to HQO P5212.3B, par. 7003)).
- d. Forms: (1) DD334 - Cross Reference Sheet
(2) NAVMC 363 (5211) - Charge-out Card
(3) Backing Sheet (optional)

2001 GUIDES AND REFERENCE MATERIAL

1. Listed below are guides and references required in the maintenance and operation of a file station:

- a. SECNAVINST 5210.11A, Standard Subject Identification Codes.
- b. HQO P5212.3B, Headquarters Records Disposition Manual.
- c. HQO P5000.3A, Headquarters Manual, Vol II, par. 29150.
- d. HQO P5211.7B, SOP for Unclassified Subject Correspondence Files.

CHAPTER 3

MATERIAL RECEIVED FOR FILE

3000 SOURCE

1. Material received for file in a subject correspondence file station consists of the green file copies of outgoing correspondence, correspondence addressed to this Headquarters, and other papers originated and received within this Headquarters.

3001 OFFICIAL FILE COPY

1. Navy Regulations, Article 1613 states that "Copies of all official correspondence sent and the original of all official correspondence received, and such other correspondence as will or may become the subject of future reference or action shall be preserved in files." Subject to this article and in conformance with SECNAVINST 5216.5A, Navy Correspondence Manual, staff agencies of this Headquarters are required to prepare a distinctive "green" file copy (or copies of reproduced material on white paper but marked at the bottom of the first page "Green File Copy") to identify the official file copy of outgoing correspondence, for such files.

2. The green file copy of correspondence, with related material, which warrants permanent retention will be forwarded to the Central Files Section or filed in the permanent files of the decentralized file as appropriate. Green file copies of correspondence which does not warrant permanent retention will be retained in the temporary files of the originating office.

3002 IDENTIFYING AND GROUPING FILES

1. Papers received in the decentralized file station will fall into the following categories:

- a. Those of permanent value
- b. Those of temporary value
- c. Nonrecord material

Identifying papers of permanent value from those of temporary value is paramount to the orderly disposition of papers when they are no longer needed by the office.

2. Correspondence files of permanent value are a small portion of the accumulated files of an office. They reflect the organization, mission and administrative history of the agency. They include documents establishing policy, procedures, programs and projects and they are preserved for evidential, legal, historical, and research value.

3. The originator or office responsible for marking the papers for file makes the determination regarding material of permanent value and accepts the responsibility for assuring that it is received by the Central Files Section (refer to par. 7000.1).

4. Papers of permanent value which are forwarded to the Central Files Section, upon completion of action are: Headquarters and Marine Corps Directives including changes thereto and all related matter with original comments; completed staff studies; board reports; and other papers affecting the history, development and staff functions of the Marine Corps. The original or record copy of these papers will not be retained in a decentralized file.

5. Correspondence files of temporary value are those papers filed within the decentralized files that become eligible for destruction after a specified period of time or event. They are of routine and operational nature. These papers are not forwarded to the Central Files Section. In some cases they are retired to the Washington National Records Center, Suitland, Maryland, by the cognizant office, for further retention (see par. 7000.2).

6. Not all correspondence and papers received within a file station should be placed in the files. Papers that are worthless as records or lose their value after action has been taken are classed as nonrecord material. This material will not be given a subject identification for placement in the files. These papers should be destroyed when they have served the purpose for which they were created. HQO P5212.3B, Headquarters Marine Corps Records Disposition Manual should be consulted for the definition of nonrecord material as well as typical examples of such material.

CHAPTER 4

FILING PROCEDURES

4000 PREPARATION OF DOCUMENT FOR FILE

1. A review of the material received for file is necessary to determine if it is complete and ready for file. Certain steps are required in this preliminary process:

a. If a routing sheet is attached, check this to assure that routing has been completed.

b. Duplicate and extraneous papers must be removed from the file so that the records are not burdened with useless papers. The routing sheet should not be made a part of the permanent file unless it contains record information pertinent to the file of which it is a part.

c. The file material must indicate that it has been released for file. The word "File" and the initials of the individual releasing the material for file is written in the lower right corner of the material.

d. Incoming correspondence which does not require a written reply is marked "File" and initialled to indicate that action has been completed, before it is entered into the files. If no action was required, this will be indicated.

e. Incoming correspondence and the green file copy in answer are stapled together and filed under the date of the reply. In the instance where the incoming correspondence is held pending further action, notation of such will be made on the green file copy by the action office before it is entered into the file. When action is finally completed on the incoming correspondence, a notation of each separate action and date of each will be entered thereon before it is released for file.

f. The green file copy must bear the date and the name and title of the official signing the correspondence.

g. Assure that appropriate references and enclosures are attached or have been previously placed in the files.

h. Prepare the material for file by removing all paper clips, and staple securely at the upper left corner. If the papers are bulky, staple at both upper left and right corners.

4001 SUBJECT IDENTIFICATION

1. After the preliminary preparation for file, correspondence is read and analyzed to determine the general significance of the document and the subject by which the papers are likely to be requested.
2. The first step is to determine the appropriate major subject category, then select the correct subdivision, e. g., primary, secondary, tertiary or arbitrary as the case requires. In some instances the major subject identification will be used.
3. The subject identification under which similar documents are filed influences the identification used. Where the subject of the correspondence is vague, the originating office should be contacted to obtain a clearer conception of the subject matter. Do not be misled by an identification code previously assigned to the paper, nor should the subject line be relied upon too heavily in determining the identification. Knowledge of the mission and functions of the originating office is required in selecting a file designation. The identification code is placed on the upper right corner of the document.

4002 CROSS-REFERENCING

1. At the time of subject identification, cross-referencing comes under consideration in many cases. Cross-referencing is used when more than one subject is involved or when the subject may be interpreted differently. In this case, an extra copy of the document is used, if available, or a cross-reference sheet is prepared as illustrated in figure 4-1.
2. Continuity cross-referencing is used when a document is brought forward to be consolidated with subsequent material relating to the same transaction. The cross-reference sheet is prepared and filed in the place of the document brought forward.
3. Judgment based on the knowledge of the files and the manner of making reference to them should determine the extent of cross-referencing. Avoid making and filing unnecessary cross-references.

DATE (Enter date of document.)

INDEX: (Enter subject identification code(s) of cross-reference(s), to the record copy or official file copy.)

TO: (Enter name of individual or organization to whom correspondence is addressed.)

FROM: (Show name of originator of document.)

SUMMARY: (Enter subject line of document, including any further identification needed or synopsis of important contents.)

FILED: (Enter subject identification code under which the actual document will be filed.)

INDEXER: (Enter initials of indexer.)

REMARKS:

DD FORM 1 MAR 50 334

CROSS-REFERENCE SHEET

Figure 4-1

4003 FILING

1. Once the subject identification is completed, all documents to be filed should be sorted into a filing sequence to expedite the filing operation.
2. Filing should be kept current by filing the material daily. Papers are placed in the folders in chronological order with the latest date forward. Cross-reference papers are placed in date order along with other papers in the file.
3. Generally papers should be placed in the folders loosely rather than being secured to the folder. This conserves time and space and better reference service can be provided as several people can be furnished units of the folder at the same time. Withdrawal and return of the papers to the files is facilitated when not hampered by fasteners. To accommodate expansion, the folder should be creased at the score lines at the bottom. This holds the folder in an upright position and furnishes a neater and more accessible file.

CHAPTER 5

FILE DRAWER AND FOLDER MAINTENANCE

5000 MAINTAINING FILE DRAWER EFFICIENCY

1. The contents of file cabinet drawers are shown on outside labels. The drawer label will show the type of files, inclusive identification codes, and the year or years in which the material was created, for example:

CORRESPONDENCE FILES
4000 -- 4390
1 Jan - 31 Dec 1970

2. Allow sufficient space at the rear of the drawer for expansion. This eliminates frequent shifting of material as the files grow and prevents unnecessary damage to the papers and folders.

5001 TYPE OF FOLDER

1. The use of standard file folders throughout this Headquarters is prescribed for correspondence files. These folders are listed and described in HQO 10460.2A, Standardization of File Folders and File Folder Labels.

5002 DATA SHOWN ON FOLDERS

1. Information shown on the folder illustrated in figure 5-1 is basic data. In applying the records retention standards, it is necessary that additional information be shown as indicated in HQO P5212.3B, Headquarters Records Disposition Manual, par. 7003 and figure 7-1.

5003 FOLDER CLOSEOUT

1. The capacity of the standard file folder is three-quarters of an inch. Close out the first folder when capacity has been reached. A continuing folder should be prepared for this material, unless it seems advisable to make further breakdowns from the contents of the folder. The continuing folder shall show the same identification number and subject on the folder tab.

2. If further breakdowns are made from the contents of the folder, a change is made in the subject identification of the correspondence upon transferring the material. Further breakdowns should not be established unless there are five or more documents to be identified under the new breakdown. Files are broken annually to allow for orderly disposition.

5004 FOLDER LISTINGS

1. Subject identification listings (list of file folder headings) contribute significantly to the efficiency of files maintenance. Principles of good filing require that subject identification listings be made by offices maintaining files. Staff agencies authorized to maintain decentralized files will furnish the Central Files Section with a copy of such listing. The listing will be kept current and the Central Files Section will be furnished a revised listing as changes occur. (Illustrated in figure 5-2.)

5000	GENERAL ADMIN & MANAGEMENT	OPENED	1 Jan 1970
		CLOSED	30 Jun 1970

RECORDS BRANCH (DG)
(HQMC FILES)

Figure 5-1

OFFICIAL DECENTRALIZED CORRESPONDENCE FILES
(SUB UNIT OF CENTRAL CORRESPONDENCE FILES)
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF (AIR)

1000 - MILITARY PERSONNEL (General)
1020 - Uniforms
1050 - Leave and Liberty
1130 - Enlisted Recruiting
1200 - CLASSIFICATION AND DESIGNATION
1300 - ASSIGNMENT AND DISTRIBUTION
1301 - Officer
1320 - Orders to Personnel
1320/1- Flight Orders
1400 - PROMOTION AND ADVANCEMENT
1500 - TRAINING AND EDUCATION
1500/1- School Quotas
1600 - PERFORMANCE AND DISCIPLINE
1650 - Decorations, Medals and Awards
2100/1- Incoming Messages
2100/2- Outgoing Messages
3000 - OPERATIONS AND READINESS (General)
3900 - RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
4600 - TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION
5000 - GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

Figure 5-2

CHAPTER 6

RESEARCH AND CHARGE OUT

6000 RECEIVING REQUEST AND LOCATING MATERIAL

1. The successful operation of a file system depends upon the ability to locate documents promptly. Following certain procedures in the search for the document will contribute to the finding efficiency.
2. The person receiving the request should obtain as much information as possible from the requestor to assist in the search and identification of the needed document. Particular information needed is, subject matter, the date and the originator, if known. In most cases the requestor will identify the type of document in making the request.
3. Material of a general subject may be located by going directly to the file after securing adequate information. If the searcher is not sure of the file designation, the subject identification guide should be consulted.
4. When a request is received for a complete file on a given subject, look under all subject identifications where there is a possibility that records on the subject might be filed.

6001 CHARGE OUT PROCEDURES

1. Any document removed from the file for use in an office is charged out to the requestor or user. This prevents misplacement of the document(s) and keeps file operators informed as to location of file material loaned out.
2. The documents are removed from the folder and fastened to a backing sheet, which identifies the file from which it was taken, before release to requestor. A charge-out card is inserted in the file where the document was removed. When an entire folder is charged out, the contents are secured within the folder by metal fasteners before release to the requestor and NAVMC 363 (5211), charge-out card, is substituted in its place. (See figures 6-1 and 6-2 for illustrations of backing sheet and charge-out card respectively.)

6002 FOLLOWUP, RETURN, AND REFILE OF DOCUMENT OR FOLDER

1. Periodic followup should be made to ensure prompt return of the material to the files. Upon return of the file, the

backing sheet is removed from the material, the material is placed in the files, the charge-out card is pulled from the files, and the information is crossed off the charge-out card.

THIS CORRESPONDENCE HAS BEEN CHARGED TO YOU. PLEASE RETURN AS PROMPTLY AS PRACTICABLE. IF FILE IS TRANSFERRED, PLEASE ADVISE BY CALLING TELEPHONE EXTENSION _____.

RETURN TO _____

Figure 6-1

CHARGE-OUT CARD (5211)

NAVMC HQ 363
SUPERSEDES NAVMC 10294-ADM WHICH WILL BE USED

OUT

DESCRIPTION (File symbol, subject, and date)	CHARGED TO (Person, room no., and extension)	DATE CHARGED
MCO 5405.7 w/4 chgs dtd 9 Jan 1970	Ltj. J. M. Fuller Ac. 3B x 41361	1 Jun 70
ACIB memo to DCS/Air 21 Dec 1969 (5320)	Ltj. J. Cherry Ac. 1C x 43451	2 Aug 70
CHE Study #2-1965 5450 - Gibbany (21-6.5)	Mrs. B. Williams CHE x 42973	11 Sep 70

Figure 6-2

CHAPTER 7

RETIREMENT OF CORRESPONDENCE FILES

7000 POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. Staff agencies maintaining decentralized files are required to schedule and send to the Central Files Section, all unclassified correspondence files having permanent value when they have reached the age of four calendar years. These files are retired to the Washington National Records Center from the Central Files Section when they have reached the age of five calendar years. The Central Files Section provides a research service on these files.

2. Correspondence files of temporary value which have reached an inactive status are destroyed or retired pending eligibility for destruction, in accordance with HQO P5212.3B, Headquarters Records Disposition Manual. These files are not retired through the Central Files Section but assistance in the retirement action will be furnished by personnel of the Central Files Section, upon request of the staff agencies. Service on these files is provided directly to the cognizant office by the Washington National Records Center, Suitland, Maryland.

7001 RETENTION OF FILES ELIGIBLE FOR RETIREMENT

1. When certain documents held in the decentralized files cannot be feasibly retired within the prescribed period, arrangements will be made with the head of the Central Files Section for the withholding of this file material by the cognizant office. This will be accomplished by furnishing the folder subject identification listings of those withheld, the volume of the material, and the approximate date of release of such file folders.

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACTIVE FILES - Files required by the activity which created them for conduct of business.

ARBITRARY SUBDIVISION - A breakdown for use within a file station, always preceded by a slant (/) to distinguish it from the basic subject identification numbers.

BACKING SHEET - A sheet attached to material on loan, bearing the return identification of the files from which it was loaned.

CENTRALIZED FILES - The files of an organization physically located in one place.

CHARGE-OUT CARD - A card inserted in the file in place of loaned material, and showing the date charged and person to whom charged.

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER - Progressive date sequence.

CLASSIFYING - The act of writing file designations in upper right corner in the process of identification of papers to be filed.

CONTINUITY FILING - Consolidating related papers by combining records of earlier dates in date sequence with more recent records.

CROSS-REFERENCE - A form or extra copy filed under an additional subject to indicate where the basic papers can be located.

CUTOFF - A designated time beyond which material of a later date is not added to a file series. This breakoff or discontinuance of file series, usually established on a calendar or fiscal year basis, except in case or project files, facilitates the transfer and disposal of correspondence files.

DECENTRALIZED FILES - Correspondence files maintained by officially authorized file stations. These files are a sub-unit of the Central Correspondence Files and are maintained in accordance with approved procedures.

DISPOSITION - Destruction or transfer of correspondence files to records centers for permanent retirement or eventual destruction when eligible, in accordance with disposition schedules.

ELIGIBLE FOR RETIREMENT OR DESTRUCTION - Files having met a specified requirement for destruction or no longer needed in the active files of an office and eligible for transfer.

FOLDER CLOSEOUT - To discontinue filing material in a folder after it has reached its capacity or at the end of a specified period of time or event.

FOLLOWUP - A review of charge-out cards followed by inquiry regarding return of over-due, loaned-out material.

INACTIVE FILES - Files referred to only occasionally in the conduct of business.

NONRECORD MATERIAL - Transitory material which serves no documentary or record purpose and which can be destroyed without filing. Also work sheets, routing sheets, and notes which have no significance after preparation of the record copy.

OFFICIAL FILE COPIES - Documents or papers which constitute the record copies of an organization.

OFFICIAL FILE STATION - A physical location within an organization, specifically designated to maintain and service the official correspondence files.

PERMANENT RETENTION - Permanent preservation of files through a scheduled retirement via the Central Files Section to the Washington National Records Center.

PERMANENT VALUE - Papers worthy of permanent preservation.

PROJECT OR PACKET FILES - Made up of papers pertaining to a specific action, transaction, organization, location, or thing.

RECORD MATERIAL - Documentary material created or received by an agency, preserved as evidence of the organization, programs, policies, procedures and operations of the agency for reference value.

RETIREMENT - The systematic disposition of inactive files through transfer to a records center.

STANDARD FILE FOLDER - A file folder selected to meet specific requirements and adopted for use within an organization.

SUBJECT FILE FOLDER LISTING - A listing of files by folder, maintained at a file station, arranged in the same subject numerical order as the file identification guide.

SUBJECT IDENTIFICATION - Process of determining subject matter and category through analyzing and grouping of file material under the appropriate file subjects.

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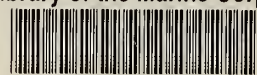
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Standing operating procedure for
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